

REMARKS

I. Status of the Claims

Claims 18, 19, 31, 32, 38, 39, 55, 56 and 65-67 are pending in the application and stand rejected, variously, under 35 U.S.C. §101, 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph and 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. The specific grounds for rejection, and applicants' response thereto, are set out in detail below.

II. Objection to Specification based on Sequence Information

The examiner has maintained the objection to FIG. 9 as still include sequences without reference to sequence identifiers. An appropriate amendment to the FIG. 9 legend has been provided.

III. Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §101

The claims stand rejected as not distinguished from products of nature. Applicants have amended the claims as suggested by the examiner to recite isolated antibodies. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

IV. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph

Claim 39 is rejected under the second paragraph as allegedly lacking antecedent basis. Applicants have amended the claim such that the rejection is believed to be overcome. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

V. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §112, First Paragraph

Claims 18, 19, 31, 38, 39, 55 and 65-67 are rejected under the first paragraph of §112 as lacking an adequate written description and containing new matter. Applicants traverse.

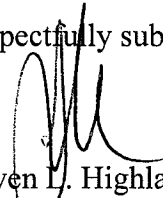
First, applicants wish to thank Examiner Blanchard for the courtesy of an in-person interview held on November 14, 2006, which interview is believed to have substantially advanced the prosecution. During the interview, support for claim 18 was discussed. The discussion included (a) reference to footnote 1 in the last response filed in prosecution of the instant application, which stated “Support for the positions of the CDRs within SEQ ID NO. 143 as now recited in the claims can be found in FIG. 7, in combination with the corresponding figure legend on page 19 of the priority application, WO 98/46645, and support for the positions of the CDRs within SEQ ID NO. 141 as now recited in the claims are depicted in FIG. 6, in combination with the corresponding figure legend on page 19 of the priority application, WO 98/46645”; and (b) page 19 of the specification, bottom half, where it is stated that the VH and VL chains comprise “at least one CDR” from the sequences of FIGS. 7 and 6, respectively.

Though agreement was not reached, Examiner Blanchard indicated that the support cited would be considered favorably if submitted in a formal response, which applicants now provided. Therefore, applicants believe that the record now demonstrates adequate support for the claims as resubmitted herein. Reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

VI. Conclusion

All claims are believed to be in condition for allowance, and an early notification to that effect is earnestly solicited. Should Examiner Helms have any questions regarding this response, a telephone call to the undersigned is invited. Please date stamp and return the enclosed postcard as evidence of receipt.

Respectfully submitted,



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